

REMARKS

Status

This Amendment is responsive to the Office Action dated July 28, 2005 in which Claims 1-8 were rejected. No claims have been canceled; Claims 1, 2, 5, and 6 have been amended; and new Claims 9-13 have been added. Accordingly, Claims 1-13 are pending in the application, and are presented for reconsideration and allowance.

Claim Rejection - 35 USC 103 – Claims 1-7

Claims 1-7 stand rejected under 35 USC 103 as being unpatentable over US Patent No. 5,665,976 (*Arakawa*) in view of US Application No. 2001/0012386 (*Struye*). As best understood, the Office Action's position is that *Arakawa* does not disclose that the beam of light is suppressed during retrace nor does *Arakawa* disclose that the erasure with the light of the first frequency range occurs during retrace while the stimulating light is suppressed, however, *Struye* teaches the step of suppressing, so it would be obvious to suppress the beam of light during retrace and to perform the step of erasure with light of the first wavelength range while the stimulating light beam is suppressed because image acquisition is not occurring. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

A sometimes constraining consideration for storage phosphor readers is the time involved in acquiring images from an exposed phosphor screen. This time can be separated generally into "cycle time" and "scan time". Cycle time refers generally to the interval beginning when a phosphor screen is loaded into a reader and ending when the phosphor screen has been extracted from the reader. Scan time describes the interval beginning when stimulating radiation is first applied to the phosphor screen to obtain stimulated radiation and ending when no more stimulated radiation (i.e., image information) is being collected. For example, in conventional systems, the scan time may be the time required to make a single pass over the phosphor screen.

The present invention is directed to reducing scan time. The present invention reduces the scan time by simultaneously reading and erasing the phosphor screen, and more specifically, by conducting erasing during retrace (i.e., when the stimulating radiation is returned to the start of the next line of scanning).

The claimed feature of independent Claims 1 and 5 of the present invention is not obvious from the cited references.

Firstly, neither of the cited references is addressing Applicant's problem. *Arakawa* is directed toward "better erase" (Col 3, line 43). Refer to Col 3, lines 34-44. *Struye* is directed to an electrical representation of a radiation image.

Further, as stated in the Office Action, *Arakawa* does not disclose that the erasure with the light of the first frequency range occurs during retrace while the stimulating light is suppressed. As to *Struye*, while *Struye* mentions a retrace step when discussing the path of the laser beam, *Struye* is completely silent as to any erasure of a storage phosphor sheet. Absent some teaching, suggestion, or incentive supporting the combination, obviousness cannot be established. Since such a showing is absent, it appears that the Examiner has used Applicant's teaching to hunt through the prior art for the claimed elements and combine them as claimed by Applicant.

Still further, even if combined as suggested by the Office Action for argument purposes only, Claims 1 and 5 would not result since *Arakawa* teaches exposing the phosphor sheet to the second erasing after complete readout of the phosphor sheet. (Refer to *Arakawa*'s Col 6, lines 36-45 and claim 1.) Thus, *Arakawa* teaches away from affecting erasure using retrace, as claimed in independent Claims 1 and 5.

Claims 2-4 and 6-7 are dependent on Claim 1 or 5, and therefore includes all the features thereof. For the reasons set forth above with regard to Claims 1 and 5, Claims 2-4 and 6-7 are also believed to be patentable.

In addition, with specific regard to Claims 2 and 6, *Arakawa* teaches employing lamps having a wide spectrum, including visible light and ultraviolet light. Refer to Col 7, lines 1-19. Accordingly, *Arakawa* does not disclose the claimed feature of amended Claims 2 and 6 of light essentially of a particular frequency/color. As such, Claims 2 and 6 are not obvious in view of the cited references, and are therefore believed to be patentable.

Further, with specific regard to Claim 7, *Struye* teaches the use of an LED as the stimulating radiation, not for erasure. Refer to *Struye* at Paragraph 0058. Thus, it is not obvious from the cited references that LEDs could be

employed for erasure. Rather, it appears that the Examiner has used impermissible hindsight and the teachings of this application in an attempt to make obvious the present invention.

For the reasons set forth above, Claims 1-7 are believed to be patentable over the cited references.

Claim Rejection - 35 USC 103 – Claim 8

Claim 8 stands rejected under 35 USC 103 as being unpatentable over US Patent No. 5,665,976 (*Arakawa*) in view of US Application No. 2001/0012386 (*Struye*) and further in view of US Application No. 2002/0070681 (*Shimizu*).

Claim 8 is dependent on independent Claim 5, and therefore includes all the features thereof. For the reasons set forth above with regard to Claim 5, Claim 8 is also believed to be patentable.

New Claims

New Claims 9-13 have been added, and are believed to be patentable for the reasons set forth above.

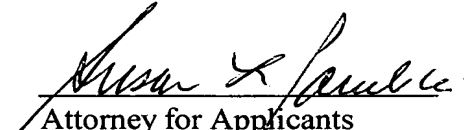
Summary

Should the Examiner consider that additional amendments are necessary to place the application in condition for allowance, the favor is requested of a telephone call to the undersigned counsel for the purpose of discussing such amendments.

For the reasons set forth above, it is believed that the application is in condition for allowance. Accordingly, reconsideration and favorable action are respectfully solicited.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any fees in connection with this communication to Eastman Kodak Company Deposit Account No. 05-0225.

Respectfully submitted,


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